

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

Austria does not believe that the role of the Security Council should end here. The security system that we are starting to establish today in the Gulf will need to be integrated into a broader regional approach, including a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem. This obviously cannot be done overnight in one isolated act, but rather through a process which will require time to develop and to be carried out. Consequently, we need all the more to take the first steps as soon as possible. The elimination of economic tensions as a potential source of conflict is another task as well.

Let me conclude by offering a few more thoughts on what Sir Brian Urquhart has called "Learning from the Gulf" (The New York Review of Books, 7 March 1991).

I have already mentioned the need for arms control, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, restraint with regard to the flow of arms in sensitive regions, tackling economic disparities and the settlement of other conflicts. But there is more. One lesson from this crisis is, indubitably, that the preventive capacity of the United Nations has finally to be strengthened. There is already no shortage of ideas: closer monitoring of potentially dangerous situations both by the Security Council itself and the Secretary-General and the preventive deployment of United Nations personnel as a deterrent and as a trip-wire which could set in motion pre-planned enforcement action under Chapter VII of the Charter. Another lesson is to look more closely into United Nations enforcement action. As my colleague and friend, Ambassador Pickering, himself mentioned in a speech on 4 March, future Security Council recourse to authorizations to use force might well carry more "fine print" on how to apply and command that force. He went on to suggest that "we should begin now to look over the ground of possible United Nations enforcement arrangements as set forth in the Charter". Maybe we should indeed agree on

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discussing possible lessons from the Gulf crisis and the United Nations response in an appropriate framework.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of Austria for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. MUNTEANU (Romania): I should like at the outset to extend to you, Sir, the warmest congratulations of the delegation of Romania on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month. We are confident that under your very able guidance, the Council will manage to fulfil its mandate during the particularly busy and delicate period of its proceedings.

My delegation also takes this opportunity to pay a highly deserved tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Peter Hohenfellner of Austria, for the exemplary manner in which he conducted the business of the Council at the formal and informal levels during the month of March.

It gives me great satisfaction to extend, on behalf of my delegation, a warm welcome to our new colleague, Mr. Jean-Jacques Bechio, the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations, who is also the representative of his country to the Security Council. We wish him every success during his mission.

We have adopted today the fourteenth resolution of the Security Council on the agenda item entitled, "The situation between Iraq and Kuwait". As a sponsor of this resolution, Romania attaches particular importance to all its provisions and believes that its implementation could indeed play a decisive role in the final settlement of the Persian Gulf crisis and in the restoration of peace and security in that area. My country's stand on this issue is well known to the members of the Security Council. We strongly defend the view that there is no justification for the use of force against a sovereign and independent State. That is why Romania condemned the annexation of Kuwait and demanded the unconditional and complete

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withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from the territory of Kuwait. Romania supported all the resolutions of the Security Council aimed at the liberation of Kuwait. This position is a clear reflection of Romania's strong and consistent commitment to morality and legality in all spheres of domestic and international life. Now we have the opportunity to see the concrete results of the actions taken by the Security Council, because Iraq has finally understood that there is no alternative to respecting the resolutions of the Security Council and the principles of international law as embodied in the Charter of the United Nations. In this context, the present meeting offers an appropriate occasion to welcome again the restoration to Kuwait of its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and the return of its legitimate Government, as well as the fact that Security Council resolution 686 (1991) marked the lifting of all the measures imposed under resolutions 661 (1990) as they applied to Kuwait. From this point of view, the resolution we adopted a moment ago is of paramount importance. It proves that one of the basic objectives of the Security Council has been fully achieved. Kuwait now enjoys all the attributes of an independent and sovereign member of the international community. For my country, this is a source of particular satisfaction not only at the general political level but also with respect to specific diplomatic work. Romania very recently reopened its Embassy in Kuwait City and will continue to develop its relationship with Kuwait in various fields of cooperation, as well as in international organizations.

It is not the intention of my delegation to establish a hierarchy of the provisions of resolution 687 (1991), which should be considered and interpreted as a whole. Nevertheless, no one can ignore the political, legal and particular value of paragraph 33, by which the Security Council declares that, upon official

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notification by Iraq to the Secretary-General and to the Security Council of its acceptance of the provisions of the resolution adopted today, a formal cease-fire is effective between Iraq and Kuwait and the Member States cooperating with Kuwait in accordance with resolution 678 (1990). We expect that Iraq will soon make the required notification concerning the acceptance of resolution 687 (1991).

It has been rightly pointed out that the failure of attempts to achieve a peaceful solution to the Persian Gulf crisis has generated tremendous destruction and suffering for the people of Iraq, a part of the great Arab nation. We have deeply regretted the human losses and sufferings. They are indeed considerable. But no one should forget who bears the full responsibility for the invasion of Kuwait, the outbreak of war and its tragic consequences. Therefore, resolution 687 (1991) should be fully implemented by Iraq. It would help to put an end to the existing situation and enable the people of Iraq to regain a dignified place among the peace-loving peoples and nations and to work for the reconstruction of the economic infrastructure of the country and for the well-being of the entire Iraqi population. We are sure that the Iraq of tomorrow will enjoy the respect and sympathy of all the States of the international community.

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

My delegation notes with interest the provisions of resolution 687 (1991) concerning the creation of a fund to pay compensation for claims addressed to Iraq by foreign Governments, nationals and corporations as a result of Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. We understand that the implementation of those provisions will not affect the implementation of recommendations of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990).

Requests for assistance made by Member States under the provisions of Article 50 of the Charter should be given the most serious attention by the Security Council. All the countries that have invoked Article 50 are confronted with special economic problems and difficulties arising from carrying out measures established by resolution 661 (1990). The Security Council knows very well the price of the implementation of sanctions against Iraq, and therefore we hope it will take appropriate action on the memorandum of 25 March 1991 (S/22382) addressed to it by 21 Member States. We also express the hope that the Security Council will make a valuable contribution to meeting the needs of the 31 States identified in the relevant recommendations made under resolution 669 (1990) of 24 September 1990.

At the same time, my delegation would like to emphasize the practical importance of paragraph 17 of resolution 687 (1991), by which the Security Council decides that all Iraqi statements made since 2 August 1990 repudiating its foreign debt are null and void and demands that Iraq scrupulously adhere to all its obligations concerning servicing and repayment of its foreign debt.

The Security Council has today adopted a resolution that is exceptional in all respects. We have in mind its far-reaching consequences for the Gulf area, world peace and security and the role of the United Nations in the peace-making process. Many new tasks are entrusted to the Secretary-General. Some, or even most, of them will be quite a novelty. The success of the resolution's implementation will depend on the degree of success of the Secretary-General in this endeavour.

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

Therefore, my delegation would like to reiterate its full support for the Secretary-General in his noble mission during this very significant period in the whole history of this world Organization.

We are now facing a new chapter in the life of the United Nations. In matters of substance what counts now is to have solid guarantees that Iraq will commit no further violations of the Charter and the basic principles of international law.

Like other delegations, we are ready to pursue our efforts within the Security Council. Such efforts should lead to the strengthening of the solidarity of this body for the full implementation of all resolutions on the situation between Iraq and Kuwait and the restoration of peace and security in the area. The unique circumstances of the issue under consideration and the decisions taken on it by the Security Council should be a landmark in our common endeavours to promote the development of a new world order. That order should be a peaceful and rational one, and it should be based on the universal legal norms, principles and values cherished by the United Nations and the whole international community.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of Romania for his kind words addressed to me.

I should now like to make a statement in my capacity as representative of Belgium.

The resolution that the Council has just adopted represents a turning point in the crisis between Iraq and Kuwait. Indeed, provided Iraq accepts its provisions, it will establish a formal cease-fire and lay the foundation for a lasting normalization of relations between the two countries.

The members of an organization devoted to defending world peace and stability cannot but be overjoyed at that.

Belgium particularly welcomes the fact that this official cessation of hostilities is the culmination of a long process designed to restore the rule of

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law, in accordance with the means laid down in the Charter. This process will go down in the annals of the United Nations.

The actions of the Security Council over the past few months illustrate the fact that international relations can be governed by the essential principles of political cooperation through multilateral diplomacy. The confrontations that our Organization has sometimes witnessed should clearly now be a thing of the past. The energy and political will that have infused the Council in this period of trial should now be used tirelessly for the peaceful settlement of other conflicts as well as the fruitful consideration of other problems facing the international community.

While the resolution thus brings down the curtain on a painful episode, it opens a new chapter by defining for the Gulf region some of the principles that should henceforth govern relations between States. In this connection, my delegation is pleased to note that a number of matters to which it attaches great importance figure prominently in the resolution.

First, it was important to make the United Nations responsible for implementing the resolution. Our Organization authorized the re-establishment of the rule of law by the legitimate use of force, and it should maintain the rule of law in peacetime.

The Secretary-General has been entrusted with many difficult tasks. He may rest assured of my Government's full cooperation.

In this context, the dispatch of observers to monitor the border between Kuwait and Iraq is an important initial step.

The Security Council's guarantee of the inviolability of the international border already recognized by the two countries is an exceptional step. My delegation regards it as a reaffirmation, in a particular context, of a fundamental

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norm of international law whose flagrant violation obliged the international community to take unprecedented collective action.

Secondly, the resolution is seriously concerned with mitigating the impact of the war on the Iraqi population. Belgium welcomed the policy of extending a hand to the Iraqi population constituted by the provisional lifting of the food embargo by the Committee on sanctions. We can only express our pleasure that the embargo will soon be repealed once and for all.

We also note that while insisting that Iraq pay fair compensation, the resolution, particularly in paragraph 19, says nothing to prevent the creation of conditions for the reconstruction of the Iraqi economy.

Finally, the text indicates how Iraq will have to behave if henceforth it intends to abide by international law and the Charter. The essential measures that will allow Iraq to resume its place in the international community include repudiating resort to and encouragement of terrorism and eliminating weapons of mass destruction, in the context of regional arms control.

Over and above concepts to which my country is attached, such as respect for international law and the maintenance of a regional balance, there is the human dimension. Here I am thinking of respect for human rights and particularly those of ethnic and religious minorities. My delegation fully associates itself with the Secretary-General's appeal on 2 April on behalf of Kurdish and Shiite refugees.

My Government believes it to be essential that the Iraqi authorities grant international and private organizations now engaged in humanitarian activities in Iraq unrestricted access to populations in distress.

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The Iraqi Government should respect its commitment to ensure the equitable distribution of food and humanitarian aid to the Iraqi population as a whole - a commitment which the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Ahtisaari, adverted to in the report he drew up immediately upon his return from his mission in Iraq.

Finally, may I say how pleased I am to see the Kuwaitis once again living in their country, with their sovereignty, integrity and independence restored, and free from the threats under which they had been living. They will doubtless still have to tackle the serious after-effects of a particularly brutal and destructive occupation, but they can now bend all their efforts to the reconstruction of their country. Belgium is prepared to help them do so.

I now resume my function as President of the Council.

The representative of Kuwait wishes to speak, and I call on him.

Mr. ABULHASAN (Kuwait) (interpretation from Arabic): I am sorry to speak at this late hour, but I wish to make the following comments on some points raised by the representative of Iraq.

First, the representative of Iraq spoke at length about the destruction of Iraq - as if Iraq had been the victim. It seems that his memory failed him about the true nature of the aggression perpetrated by his country against Kuwait, the widescale destruction of the country, the fires which continue to blaze, the poisoning of the air not only of the people of Kuwait but also of all the peoples of the region. Indeed, the oil wells now on fire in Kuwait have caused great pollution, which will not be restricted to Kuwait but will extend to the entire Gulf region and even to India, and will affect public health, agriculture, soil.

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

It seems that the Iraqi representative found it convenient to overlook these acts perpetrated by his regime only hours before its defeat. But he did remember that some weapons had been used against Iraq which might give rise to some diseases among the Iraqi people.

Secondly, the representative of Iraq spoke about his country's right to reparations. In my view, the representative of Iraq should be the last person to speak about reparations, because Iraq and the Iraqi army looted, plundered and destroyed the entire economic infrastructure of Kuwait; and now they are showing reluctance to return the looted property despite their declaration that they were willing to do so.

Thirdly, the representative of Iraq said that the Security Council had never imposed boundaries before and that Iraq views the paragraphs of resolution 687 (1991) dealing with the question of boundaries as an infringement of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. He said that Iraq would therefore reserve its legitimate rights. This is in contradiction with an unconditional acceptance of the Security Council resolution.

Indeed, there is no contradiction between the Security Council's request to demarcate the boundary and operative paragraph 3 of resolution 660 (1990). I wish to make two points in this regard.

The first point is this: The boundary provided for in the resolution was not imposed on Iraq or on Kuwait. Rather, it was agreed upon by the two countries on 4 October 1963. In fact, the boundary is not a question of any controversy or of any quarrel. This is clear from document S/22432, which illustrates the nature of the agreement between Iraq and Kuwait on the question of boundaries and on the agreement concluded between the two countries in this regard. All we are talking about here is the demarcation of the boundary; that is the thrust of this resolution.

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

My second point is this: We wonder what violation of the Iraqi border is constituted by the Security Council calling upon the Secretary-General to offer the necessary technical aid in order to demarcate the boundary. Through the demarcation of the boundary, the Security Council is testing Iraq's credibility in regard to its respect for legal documents and treaties. If Iraq had such credibility, the Security Council would not have to call upon the Secretary-General or to decide to guarantee the boundary between Iraq and Kuwait. The problem is Iraq's lack of credibility. As the Council is aware, Iraq invaded, occupied and annexed Kuwait. Therefore, the quarrel between Iraq and Kuwait following that aggression and annexation is no longer a quarrel over boundaries; rather, it has become a question of greed.

Our understanding - and I think this is the common understanding in the Security Council - is that Iraq's acceptance of the resolution adopted today should be an unconditional acceptance. The Iraqi representative said earlier that Iraq reserves its legitimate rights regarding boundaries. That must be regarded as a condition which violates, indeed undermines, any official acceptance of this resolution on the part of Iraq.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now call on the representative of Iraq.

Mr. AL-ANBARI (Iraq): I apologize for speaking at this late hour. I have not asked to be allowed to speak in order to reply to the obscene remarks made by an individual sitting on my right whom I have always called a man with no identity, personal or national: I am not going to give him the benefit of a reply from my side. However, I should like to make a few remarks concerning the references I have heard from some representatives to the Kurdish question in Iraq, to the human rights of Kurds in Iraq.

(Mr. Al-Anbari, Iraq)

Prior to the aggression by the United-States-led coalition against Iraq, all the Iraqi people were in total solidarity, living in peace and defending their own country. This was true of all the Iraqi people, Arabs and Kurds, Christians and Muslims. I do not say "Shiites and Sunnis" because I believe that the dichotomization of Shiites and Sunnis is a very cynical means used in order to divide the Muslims in Iraq into two antagonistic segments.

(Mr. Al-Anbari, Iraq)

However, following the bombardment of Iraq and the temporary cessation of hostilities at the end of February, quite a number of subversive elements, who had been hiding in some neighbouring countries, penetrated the international borders of Iraq and carried out some subversive acts - shooting and destroying buildings, hospitals and schools - taking advantage of the situation in which the Iraqi army found itself following the cessation of hostilities. As soon as the Iraqi army was in a position to root them out, they had to flee the country, avoiding any confrontation with the Iraqi army. So there was no shooting and no bloodshed, and they soon found themselves safe in their refuge in some foreign countries. While they were withdrawing, as always on many previous occasions, they managed by coercion or intimidation to force quite a number of farmers and innocent citizens to join them, fleeing what they were told were chemical weapons and slaughter - totally unfounded allegations.

As far as Iraq is concerned, we view those people not only as innocent but also as very precious parts of Iraqi society and the Iraqi population. I have to say, for the record as well as for the information of the rest of the world, that the Kurds in Iraq are among the noblest and the best people. I believe that the same description applies to those 12 million Kurds who live in Turkey and the approximately 8 million who live in Iran. However, as for the 2.5 or 3 million Kurds in Iraq, we are very proud of them and they are an integral part of Iraqi society, enjoying their autonomy and their citizenship and proud of being Iraqis.

As for any refugees - and there are many, unfortunately, whether in Turkey, Iran or anywhere else - the Iraqi Government has repeatedly made it clear and makes it clear now that they are most welcome to return in peace to their families, their land and their homes. We are ready in this respect to cooperate with our neighbouring countries in order to carry out the repatriation of those refugees in an orderly and peaceful manner and with the dignity they deserve.

(Mr. Al-Anbari, Iraq)

It is cruel and cynical for any country, neighbouring or otherwise, to take advantage of the situation which Iraq and its Kurdish population are experiencing to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs and thereby attempt to avoid some domestic problems and make some political gains domestically; it is cruel and cynical to make some claims for international charity and donations while at the same time trying to hang some of these countries' dirty clothes on the shoulders of Iraq.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I must say that I regret the manner in which the representative of Iraq referred to his colleague from Kuwait.

There are no further names on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council remains seized of the question.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.